

Notes for the Federal Credentialing Forum 2000
Data Bank User Issues Session
July 10, 2000

Facilitator: Mr. Darryl Gray, DQA/Operations Branch

Background:

The Integrated Querying and Reporting System (IQRS) is a web-based tool designed to provide the national health care community with an automated query and reporting interface capability to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB).

The mission of the IQRS User Review Panel (URP) is to discuss issues regarding IQRS; identify new IQRS requirements; review current IQRS querying and reporting issues; and address National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) operational related issues.

IQRS User Group Objective:

Address operational issues with NPDB or HIPDB and discuss improvements to the IQRS. The IQRS URP is a forum where users of the NPDB-HIPDB system can gather to openly discuss and/or express their ideas about past, present and future IQRS operations.

IQRS User Review Panel (URP) “KICK-OFF” Q & A Session

Question #1: Several users wanted to know if the IQRS had the capability to query subjects by name without other data elements?

Answer #1: The querier must currently provide specific mandatory data elements to query the Data Bank(s).

Question #2: Does the Data Bank(s) enforce entities to adhere to Federal compliance of reporting actions on practitioners? Also, is there a specific timeframe?

Answer #2: Entities are required to report to the Data Bank any adverse action(s) taken against a practitioner and/or organization within 30 days of when the action was taken. The regulations provide sanctions for failure to report.

Question #3: Will the Data Bank(s) inform an entity that a practitioner under their employment has an adverse action in NPDB-HIPDB?

Answer #3: NPDB-HIPDB is not a proactive system. It is the responsibility of the entity to query the NPDB-HIPDB to determine if any practitioner under their employment or future employment has any information in the Data Bank.

Question #4: Can query results of practitioners or organizations be legally shared with other entities?

Answer #4: No. The law prevents entities from sharing information from the Data Bank(s) with other entities.

Question #5: Are user manuals for utilizing the IQRS available?

Answer #5: There is not a user manual for the IQRS. However, there are several informational documents that can be reviewed such as:

- Fact Sheets that provide guidance for Data Bank users;
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on the web site;
- The IQRS has extensive on-line help functionality.

Question #6: In trying to access IQRS via the Internet, users at the URP expressed concern about the length of time it takes to access the system. What can they do to speed up this process?

Answer #6: The Data Bank has not received recent reports of system delay problems. Users that are experiencing system performance problems should contact the Data Bank Help-Line.

Question #7: How will users transfer data from QPRAC to the IQRS?

Answer #7: The file needed to export practitioner databases from QPRAC to the IQRS can be downloaded via the web site at www.npdb-hipdb.com. The export routine is titled "QPRAC Export Utility Program", and it is found under "What's New".

Question #8: Is it possible to have the agent designated as the recipient of query results rather than the entity?

Answer #8: Yes, the agent can be designated to receive query responses. The entity designates an agent with the Data Bank. The entity decides whether the entity or agent receives the query responses. If the entity designates the agent to receive responses then the entity must contact the agent to receive the response.

Question #9: The CVOs would like to receive parsable output. How does an organization become designated as a "Third Party" user? Does a "Third Party" user list already exist?

Answer #9: Yes, there is a list of "Third Party" users that is maintained by the Data Bank. To become part of this list an organization simply has to notify the Data Bank that they are a "Third Party" user. The Data Bank will notify all designated "Third Party" users when modifications are made to our software.

URP Issues Session

- **Issue #1:** Users indicated that the system is not user-friendly in trying to perform multiple queries.
- **Response #1:** In an effort to improve the web page user interface, the IQRS web page has been redesigned to provide the Data Bank customers with a more user-friendly system. This enhancement was released to the community on August 7, 2000.
- **Issue #2:** It was suggested that DQA visit a CVO's office to get a sense of what they do and see the frustration they experience in working with Data Bank through QPRAC and IQRS.
- **Response #2:** Ms. Jennifer Dozier expressed an interest in visiting a CVO's site to better understand their day-to-day interface with the Data Bank.
- **Issue #3:** Users expressed concerns regarding the helpfulness of the Data Bank Help-Line.
- **Response #3:** DQA is concerned about this issue. DQA has worked extremely hard to improve the responsiveness and helpfulness of the Help-line by providing more training and guidance.
- **Issue #4:** Several users expressed the FAQ Page on the web site does not always fit the user's problem/scenario. How can DQA assist with this? They also stated the Help-Line does not always have the answer.
- **Response #4:** When the user can't obtain the answer to a particular question from the NPDB-HIPDB FAQ page, or other information provided on the Web site, then the first option is to call the Help-Line. The next step is to call the Division of Quality Assurance (DQA) (301) 443-2300.
- **Issue #5:** Are there any Feedback Mechanisms in place to communicate NPDB-HIPDB issues?
Response #5: There are several feedback mechanisms that users may use to communicate their IQRS operational assessments and concerns:
 - (1) **Telephone** – Direct telephone communication with the Data Bank Help-Line.
 - (2) **E-Mail** – The NPDB-HIPDB web site provides the users with the capability to express their issues over the Internet via E-Mail.
 - (3) **IQRS URP** – The IQRS URP is a forum where the Data Bank users can openly discuss and/or express their ideas to DQA about past, present and future IQRS functionality and operations.

- **Issue #6:** Can the IQRS community Beta test new software releases?
- **Response #6:** Beta testing by IQRS users is not necessary at this time. DQA has a thorough testing process in place. However, DQA is interested in having the IQRS users more involved in the design process. The users will have the most impact at this development stage rather than at the testing stage.
- **Issue #7:** When printing list of queries in QPRAC, the name of the organization/provider does not show. Can the database be programmed to print the name of the organization/provider to make it easier for the user when querying multiples names?
- **Response #7:** NPDB-HIPDB Operations has no plans to release any future updates to the QPRAC system. As of October 1, 2000 QPRAC will be discontinued. All QPRAC Users are being asked to convert over to the IQRS prior to this data. However, the name of the organization/provider does appear on the query reports in IQRS. If assistance to convert to IQRS is needed, please call the Help-Line.

Enhancement for consideration by DQA

User Report On Request: Generate a report for reporters and/or queriers, which would detail previously submitted reports or queries to the Data Bank(s). The users would need to specify the frequency or specific time, for such a report. A charge for this type of report may need to be incorporated.

IQRS Name Search: Search for subjects using data elements other than Document Control Number (DCN).

Billing: Determine a better process to help users know which organization/provider should be charged for queries. Currently, the user has to individually reconcile billing items, and they are having trouble matching the credit card numbers with the query names that are submitted.

Printing Reports: (1) Print Practitioner Name on every page of the Subject Notification Document.
 (2) Print only one page for a query response instead of two pages.
 (3) Print only one page per practitioner for multiple query output.

IQRS URP Final Comments

The IQRS users presented several new requirements (listed above) for DQA's consideration. DQA is currently analyzing these requirements to determine their feasibility, scope, cost, and the level of effort to implement. Implementation details for these requirements will be discussed at future IQRS URP.

In an effort to establish an IQRS User Review Panel, DQA is requesting membership from the IQRS User Community, to participate on this Panel. The IQRS URP will consist of twelve Panel Members from various entities that represent reporters, queriers, and third party users. The duties of the IQRS Panel Members are to:

- Periodically meet to discuss past, present, and future IQRS operations and requirements;
- Serve as the representative for their IQRS User environment;
- Recommend improvements and changes to the IQRS System;
- Actively participate in the IQRS enhancement design process; and
- Serve as a conduit to disseminate IQRS information to the Healthcare Community.

Those users who are interested in becoming a member of this panel should E-mail Darryl Gray at dgray@hrsa.gov or call (301) 443-0910. The next IQRS URP is tentatively scheduled for Fall 2000.

Thank you very much for your time and participation in establishing the IQRS URP.

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